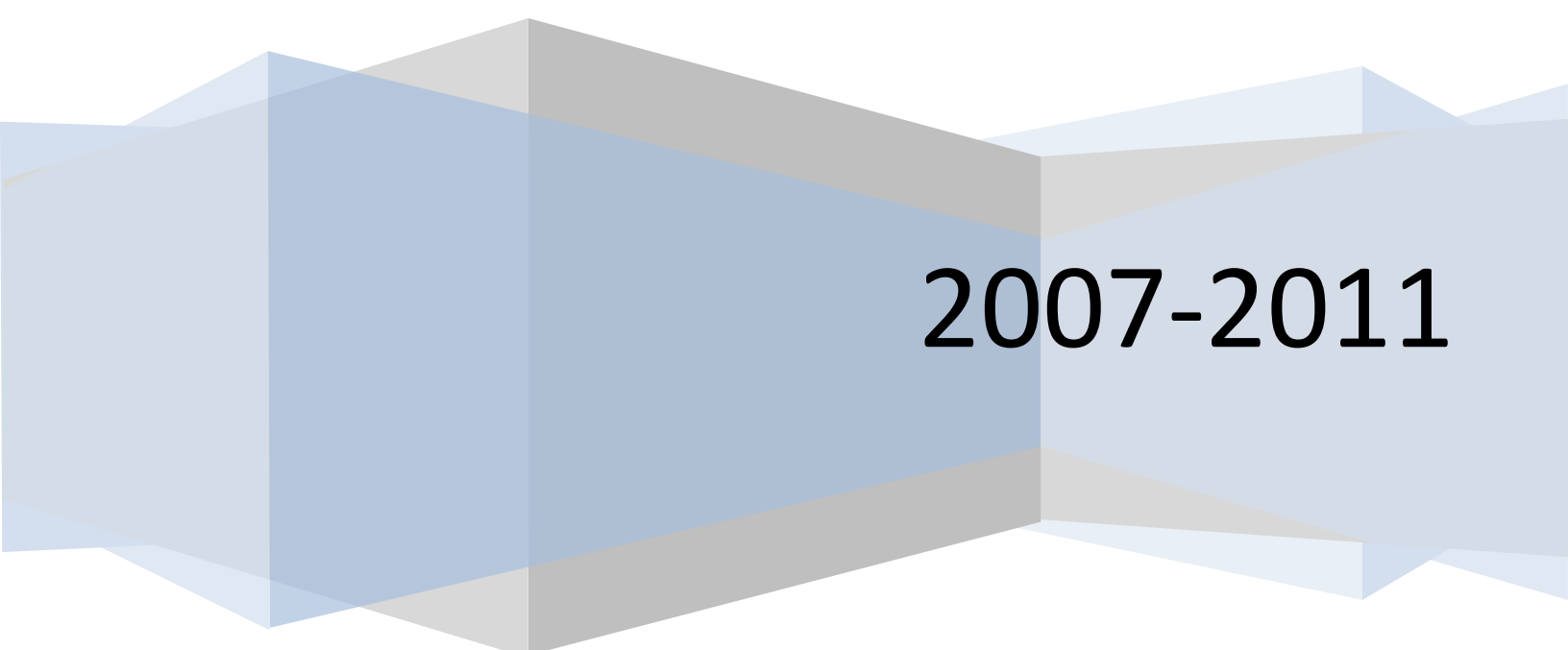


MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Analysis of School Lockdown Incidents

**Office of School Facilities
Division of Safety and Emergency Management**



2007-2011

Background

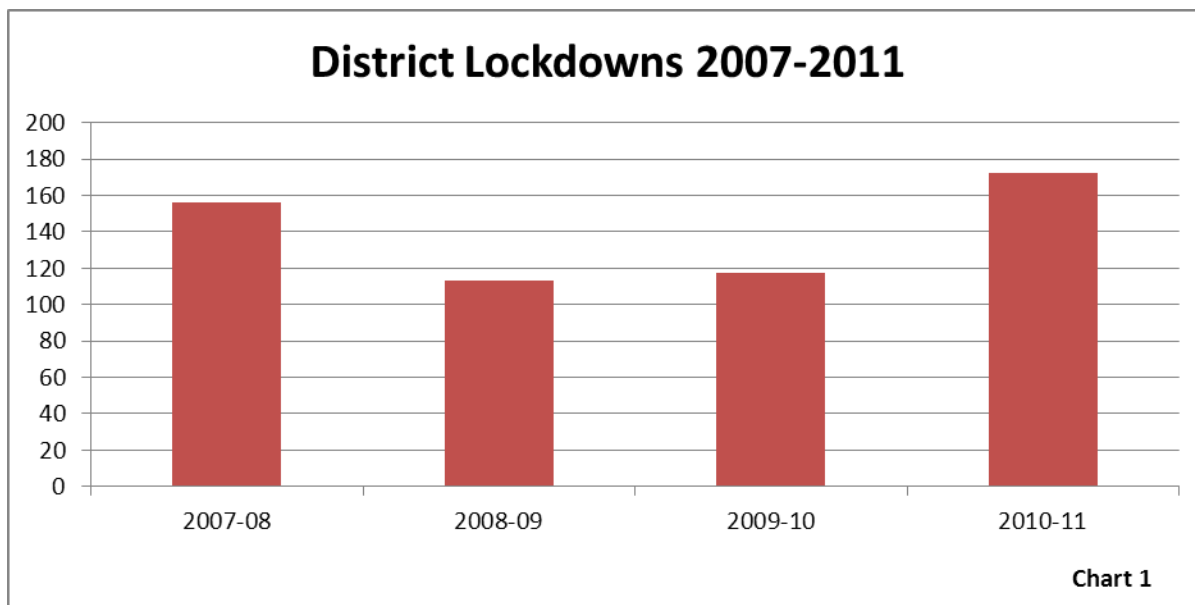
School administrators, School Police or other public safety agencies may initiate a lockdown to safeguard the students and staff members at a school site in response to emergencies. Across the nation school districts depend on lockdowns as a primary response to internal and external threats.

Lockdowns are designed to limit access to all areas of the school by removing students, staff and visitors from hallways and other common areas into locked classrooms and offices. Lockdowns are announced to the school occupants via the public address system, internal two-way radios and other site-specific procedures.

District lockdown procedures were developed with input from industry security experts and an internal committee of selected staff members. The District Critical Incident Response Plan contained the District's first lockdown procedures. Miami-Dade County public schools began performing two lockdown drills per year during 2001.

Lockdown Data

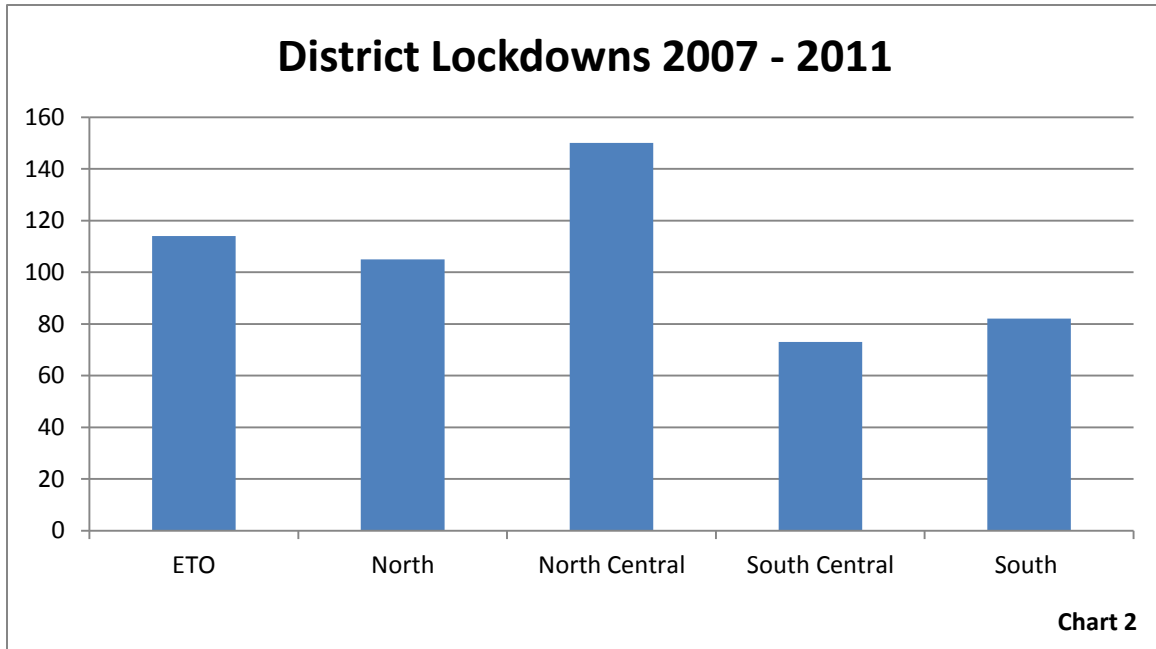
Lockdown data for this report was obtained from District Critical Incident Response (DCIRT) e-mail notification system. The review period for this report is July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2011. In response to each critical incident that occurs in the District an e-mail notification is sent to DCIRT members describing the incident. During the time period covered in this report, 558 lockdowns were performed at District schools. Chart 1 below displays the number of lockdowns performed during each year.



Lockdowns performed during the study period ranged from a low of 113 to an upper value of 172.

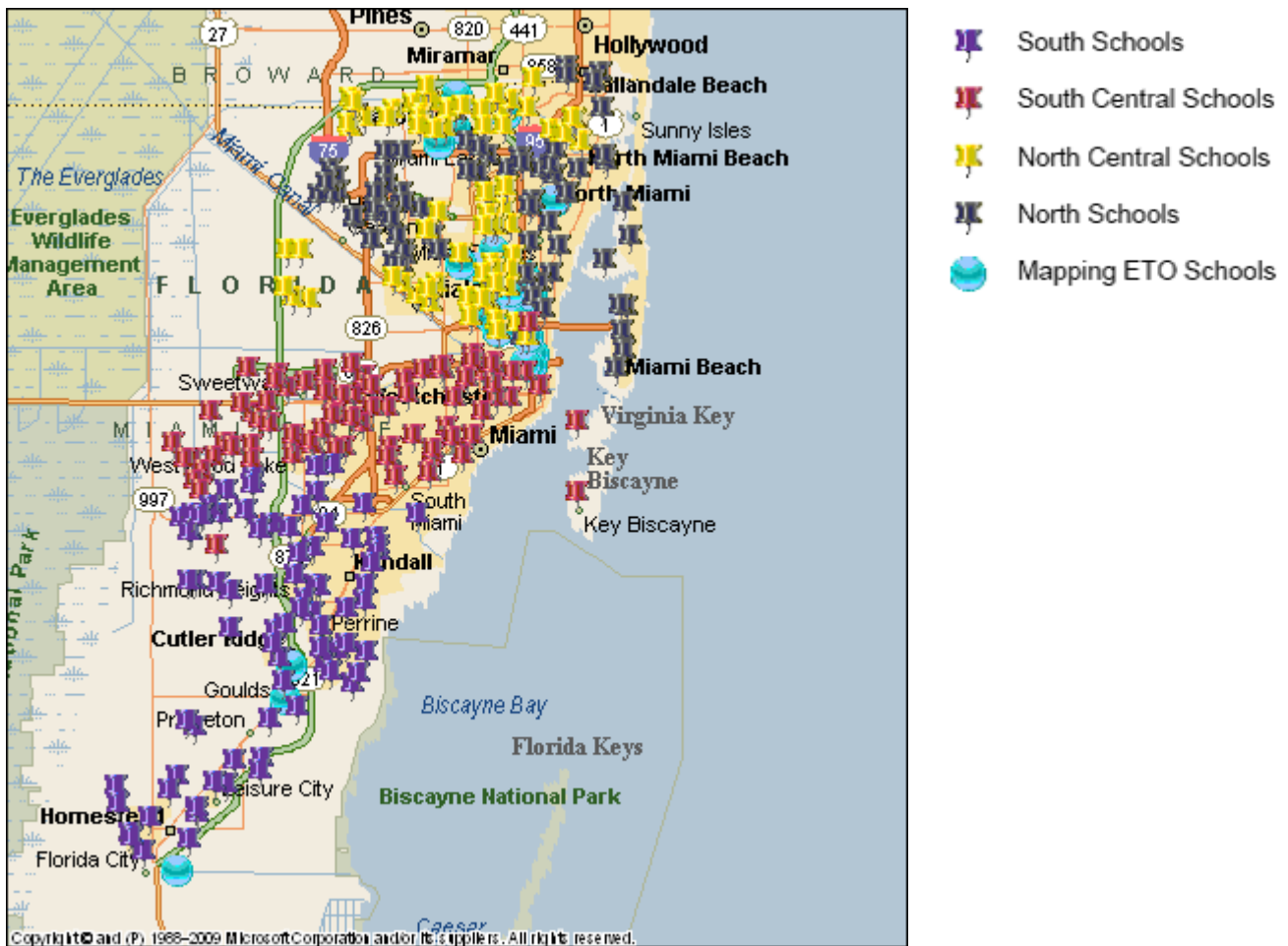
Regional Distribution

The distribution of lockdowns by District Regional Center is shown in Chart 2 below:



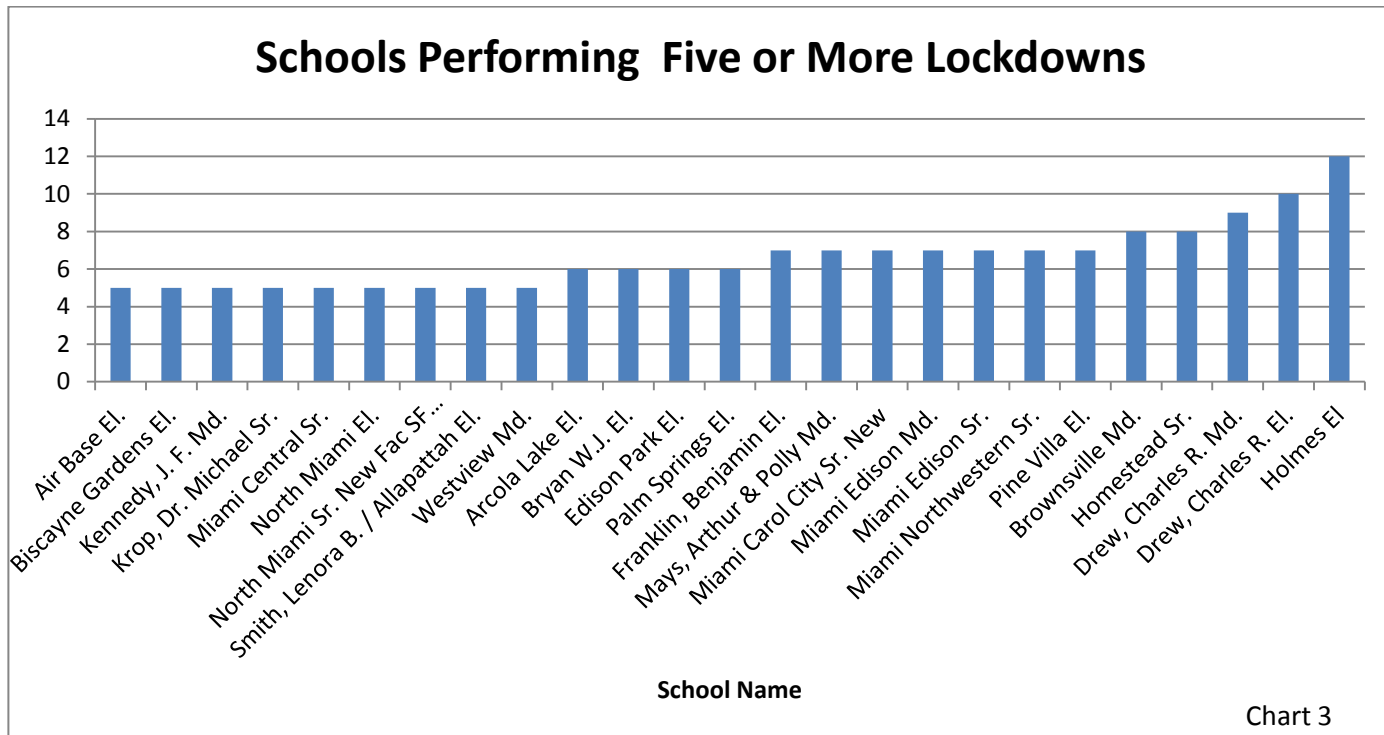
The data indicates a substantial variance between numbers of lockdowns performed throughout different District operational areas. North Central Region schools performed 150 lockdowns compared to 73 performed in South Central Region schools during the same four-year period. The difference may be attributed to the level of police activity in the neighborhoods surrounding these schools as well as the larger number and proximity of schools in the urban core of the county. Frequently, a single off-campus incident may cause lockdowns at multiple nearby schools.

The map below shows the Regional Center schools plotted on the map of Miami-Dade County.



Frequency Distribution

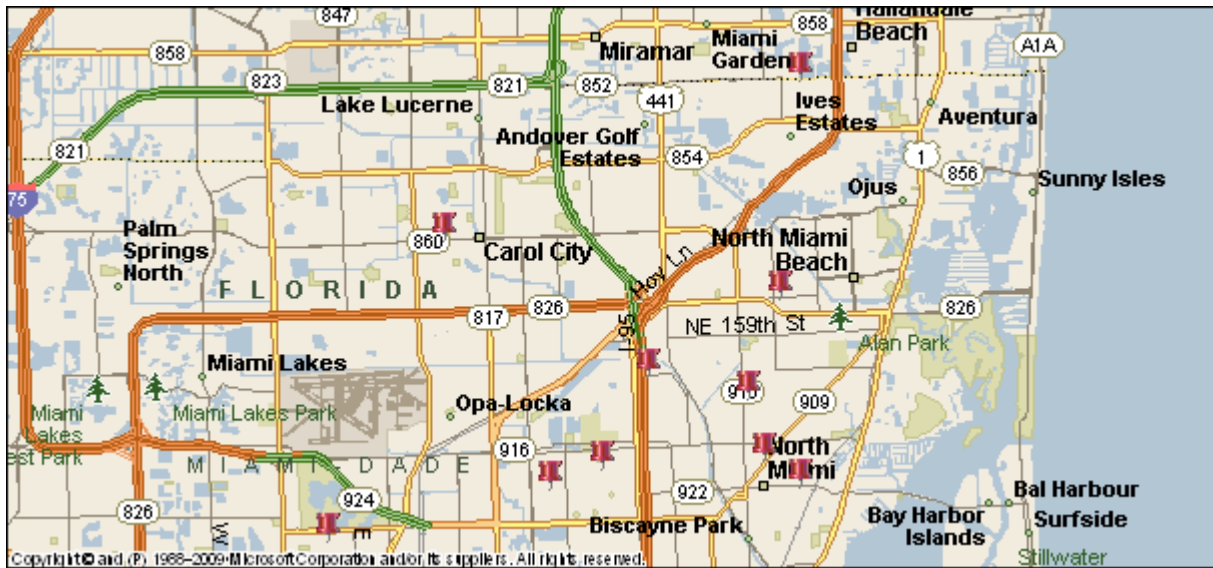
Some schools in the District perform substantially more lockdowns than others. The next series of charts and maps examines lockdowns performed at individual schools. Schools that performed five or more lockdowns are shown in Chart 3 below:



The data indicates that 25 schools have performed 30% of all lockdowns recorded during the study period.

Geographic Distribution

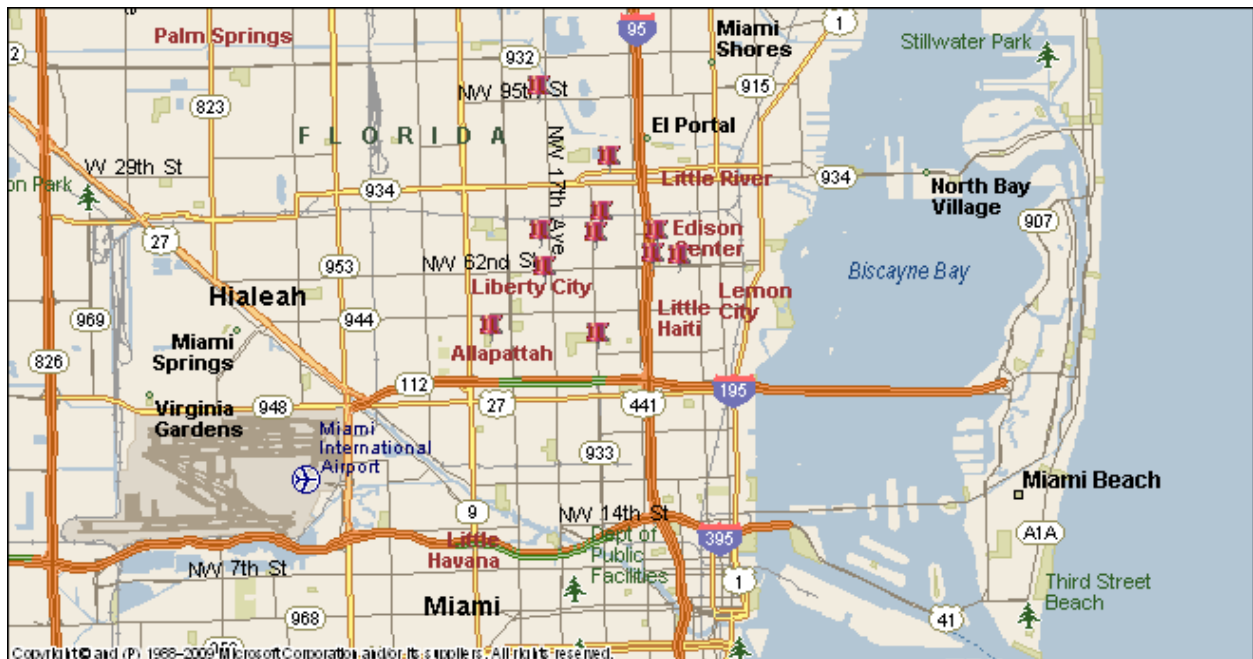
The following maps show three distinct geographic areas in the northern, central and southern parts of the county, where the 25 schools are located:



NORTH

The following 10 schools in the northern part of Miami-Dade County performed five or more lockdowns:

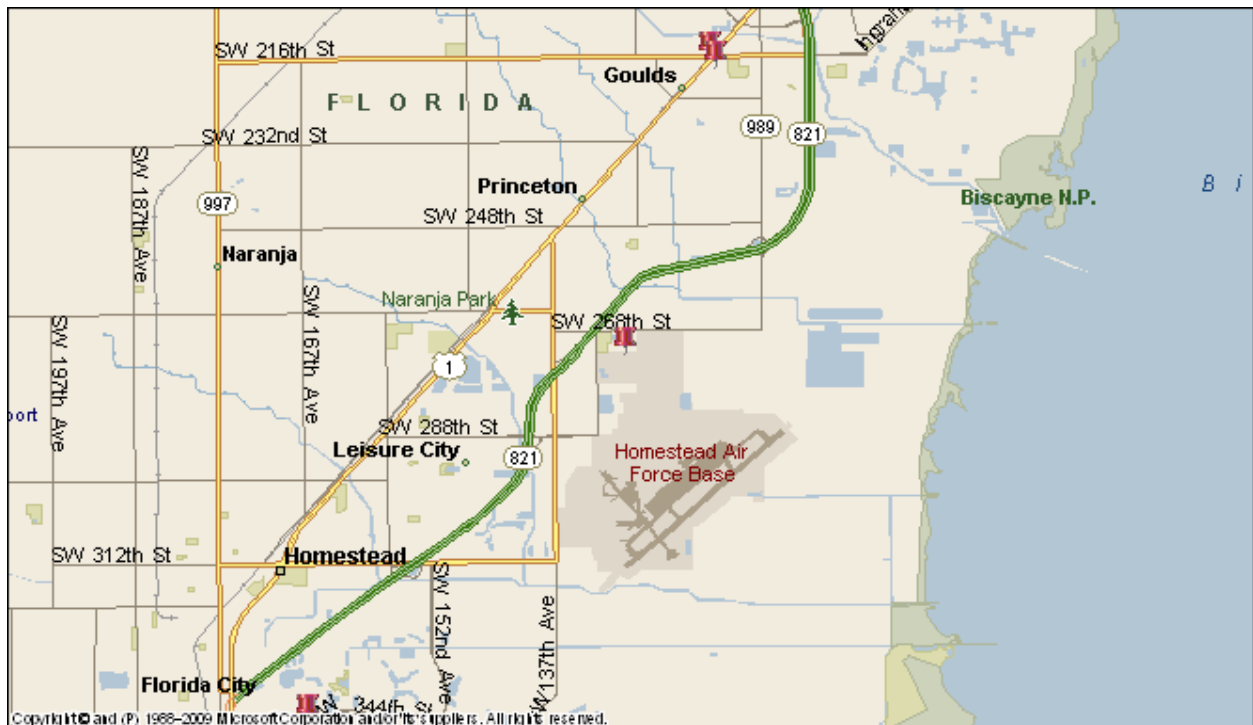
- 1 Benjamin Franklin Elementary
- 2 Biscayne Gardens Elementary
- 3 Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior
- 4 John F. Kennedy Middle
- 5 Miami Carol City Senior
- 6 North Miami Elementary
- 7 North Miami Senior
- 8 Palm Springs Elementary
- 9 W.J. Bryan Elementary
- 10 Westview Middle



CENTRAL

The following 11 schools in the central part of Miami-Dade County performed five or more lockdowns:

- 1 Arcola Lake Elementary
- 2 Brownsville Middle
- 3 Charles R. Drew Elementary
- 4 Charles R. Drew Middle
- 5 Edison Park Elementary
- 6 Holmes Elementary
- 7 Lenora B. Smith Elementary
- 8 Miami Central Senior
- 9 Miami Edison Middle
- 10 Miami Edison Senior
- 11 Miami Northwestern Senior



SOUTH

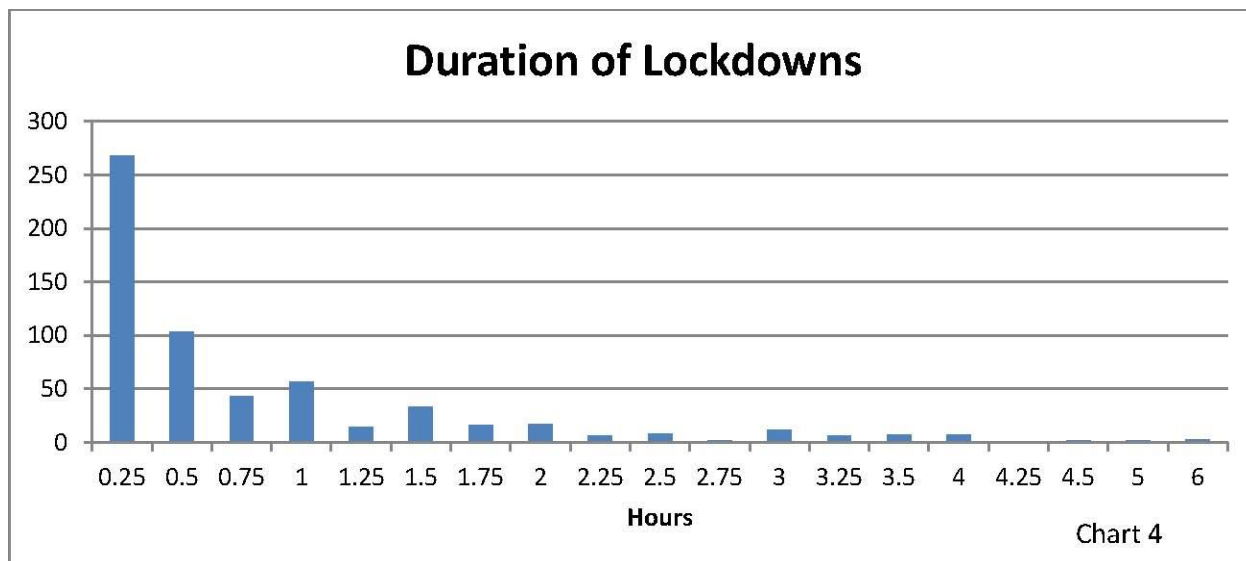
The following four schools in the southern part of Miami-Dade County performed five or more lockdowns:

- 1 Mays Middle
- 2 Pine Villa Elementary
- 3 Air Base Elementary
- 4 Homestead Senior

Duration Distribution

Implementing a timely and effective lockdown at a school site is crucial to maintaining the safety of students and staff. It is also imperative as a District to lift lockdowns as soon as the threat is abated, as determined by law enforcement and/or fire department officials. It is the goal of the District to minimize disruptions to the school day without sacrificing safety. The principal, School Police and DCIRT Team leader communicate during lockdowns via the District Emergency Communication Network (DECON). This is a county-wide 800 MHz radio system that enables all relevant parties to continuously monitor the status of any critical incident at a school.

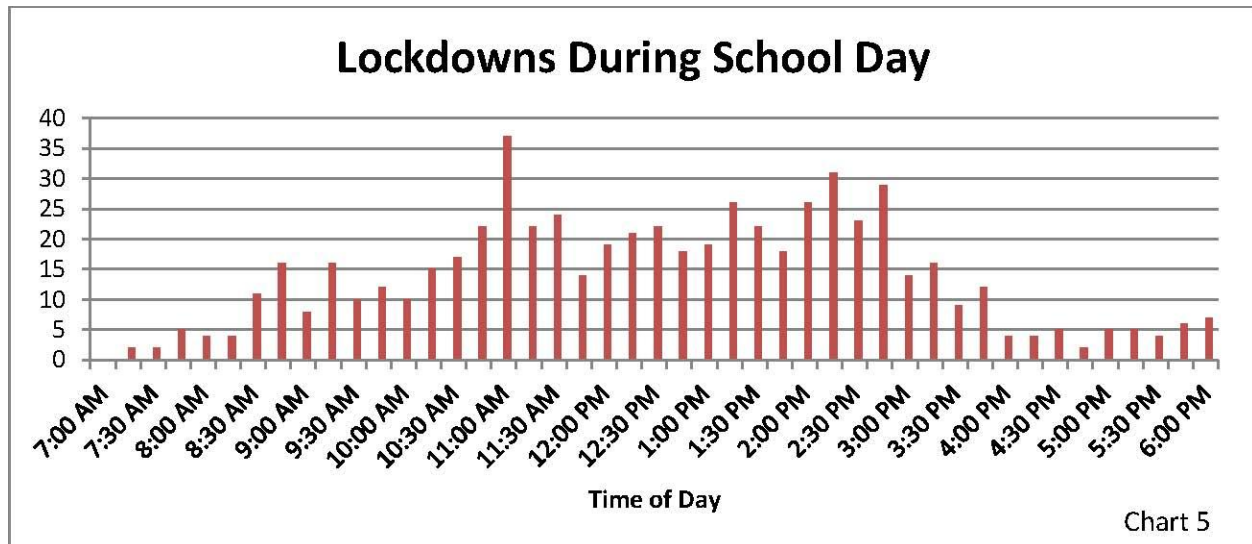
The District's immediate and well-structured communication protocol has proven valuable in promptly clearing lockdowns, as shown in Chart 4 below:



The data shows that an overwhelming majority of lockdowns are cleared in 30 minutes or less thereby minimizing disruption to school operations and delivery of instructional programs.

Time-of-Day Distribution

Lockdowns occur at any time during the school day, as shown in Chart 5 below:



The number of lockdowns performed in the early morning hours is lower than other times of the school day. There are critical times during the day when lockdowns are especially challenging to manage.

Morning arrival

Lockdowns occurring during the time when students and staff arrive are more difficult to manage and coordinate. The presence of parents and visitors on campus during arrival time presents additional challenges when managing a lockdown. Decisions to divert students and staff to an alternate school may be necessary or heightened security may allow the school to open.

Lunch

Lockdowns during lunch can disrupt and postpone lunch service at schools. Student housed in portables and remote buildings may not be allowed to walk outside to the cafeteria. Increased police presence may be needed to facilitate the lunch process.

Dismissal

Lockdown during dismissal time can disrupt or postpone the discharge of students and staff from the site. During this time busses may have arrived or need to be diverted. Parents may be in parked vehicles or waiting to enter the campus. Traffic in and around the school site will be adversely impacted by the large number of vehicles approaching the school. It is critically important to clear and lift lockdowns during dismissal, as soon as possible.

Summary

The District has well-established procedures and centralized resources to effectively respond to school-site emergencies including lockdowns. The DCIRT protocol facilitates the seamless and timely deployment of resources to school sites. Further, District and school administrators are supported by the Miami-Dade Schools Police Department in critical incident planning and response.

Recommendations

Principals and assistant principals receive periodic training regarding emergency preparedness and response at school sites. Lockdowns and evacuation protocols are discussed with emphasis on decision-making, communications and standard protocols to be followed. District administrators and DCIRT leaders should continually review incident data to determine whether regional and/or site specific measures are warranted to address any patterns observed. Information obtained in debriefing exercises following critical incidents should also be reviewed periodically to inform revisions to emergency response procedures.

Physical plant assessments must be performed, as appropriate, to address improvements such as fencing, gates, cameras, door hardware, etc. that may assist principals to manage lockdowns at their sites.

The District's focus on training school administrators must also remain a priority to ensure consistency in application of all District emergency response protocols. Collaboration with local emergency responders in drills and exercises should continue to be promoted.